

WAITING FOR ASYLUM

Battered women stuck in a legal limbo.

By Tresa Baldas
STAFF REPORTER

HUNDREDS OF allegedly abused women seeking asylum in the United States are in legal limbo due to an ongoing policy debate within the U.S. Department of Justice, according to immigration lawyers and women's rights groups.

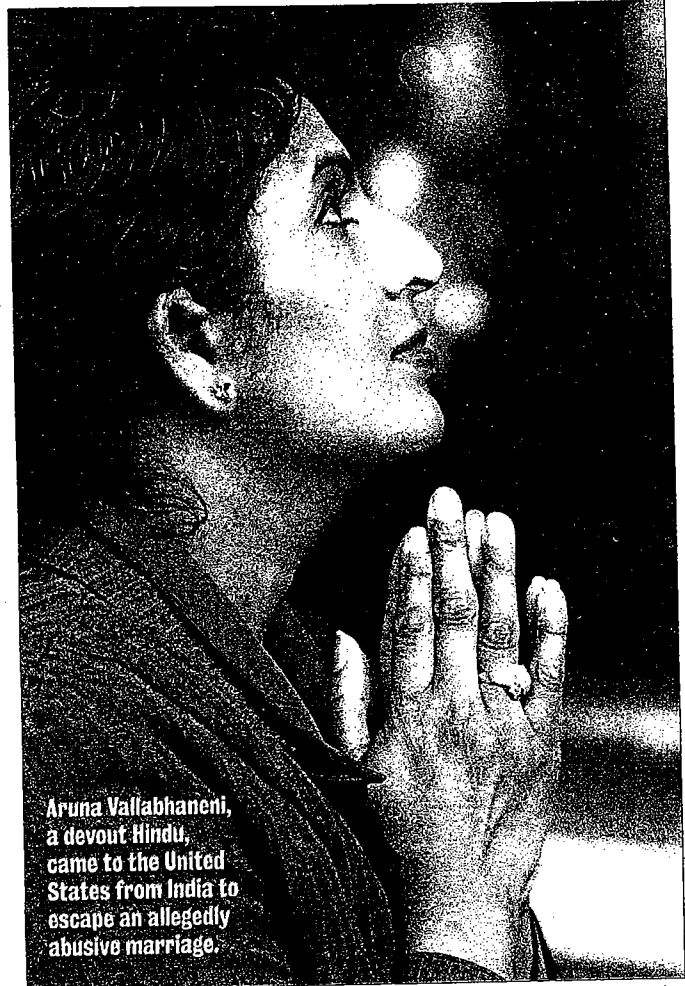
At issue are proposed regulations that would make domestic abuse a valid reason for seeking

asylum. Proposals have been on the desks of three U.S. attorneys general for eight years, but they have yet to be approved.

The long delay has been attributed to several factors, including the demise of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the absorption of its duties by the Department of Homeland Security.

The Department of Homeland Security has indicated that

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Aruna Vallabhaneni, a devout Hindu, came to the United States from India to escape an allegedly abusive marriage.

